

Maggie Blough
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IT IS NOT THE WILL OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.

THE CHILD AT HOME.

THAT ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES SHOULD PERISH.

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GIVING AWAY.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS.

TOMMY McGregor went to school with a sad heart. He had left his mother crying over a bill which she could not pay. Mrs. McGregor was an honest and hard-working woman, who wished to pay her debts, and tried hard to do so. Indeed, she never ran in debt excepting at the grocer's, and only there when she had failed to get the money for her work, and she and her children needed food. The grocer was a friend and a kind man, and was willing to trust her for a small amount. But the bill had now grown so large she dared not

go to the store again, and so this cold, winter's morning, with many sighs and tears, she had been obliged to send her little boy to school without his breakfast. She kissed him good-by, while the tears streamed down her cheeks, and her last words were, —

“O, Tommy, if Mr. Gould would only forgive us our debt! He is rich enough; O, if he only would!”

The words kept coming into the boy's thought all the way to school, and when the bell rang, and he took his place, he said over and over to himself, “If Mr. Gould only would forgive us our debt!”

The children repeated their Bible-verses, sang a

hymn, and the teacher prayed. As she closed, she repeated the Lord's prayer, and all said it after her. “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,” said the teacher, and as Tommy repeated these words he began to think. He had said them hundreds of times before, but had never taken any notice of them. Now he thought, “That is what mother said about Mr. Gould; and we are asking just the very same thing of God; I wonder what it can mean?”

In this school it was the custom for the children to write a note to the teacher when they had any particular question to ask. It saved time and confusion. There was a box by her desk into which these notes were put, and sometimes she answered them by writing, and sometimes aloud.

At recess Tommy slipped into the box a tiny piece of paper on which was written in crooked, odd sort of letters, this question: “Miss Neal, what does it mean, ‘Forgive us our debts’?”

There was no name signed, and though the teacher guessed who had written it, the question was so important she resolved to answer it before the whole school. She was very glad to do so, in fact, and this was what she said: —

“If your father owed a great bill at the grocery, and he was very poor, and could not possibly pay it, supposing the grocer should say to him, ‘I will forgive you all that debt. I know you can't pay it, but you need not feel troubled; a good man, who knows you and feels sorry for your trouble, has been in and paid it, and I have marked it on my books as settled. Of course you would have wished to pay it yourself, but it is just the same as if you had.’ Children, what would your father think of such a man? And wouldn't he feel free and happy to be rid of his debt?”

“Now we are in debt to God for many things. We owe Him obedience, and we have never paid it; we owe Him gratitude for all his kindness; we owe Him our love; we owe Him our time, and strength, and money, and all our talents. Our debts are many and large, and we have never tried to pay him. What is worse, we have such poor, sinful hearts we never can. If our debt is not paid, however, we must go to the dark prison-house of despair, and live in misery forever. There is no help in ourselves; no fellow creature can help us. We come to God and cry, ‘Forgive us our debts.’ Can God do this? Yes. Jesus, his dear Son, has been before us to the Father, and said, ‘I have paid the debts of these poor sinners. If they feel sorry for all their wrong, and come with the prayer ‘Forgive,’ forgive them for my sake.’ God, our Father and his Father, is willing and glad to do it. So against the name of every one of us who is sorry for sin, and offers this prayer for Jesus' sake, God writes, ‘Forgiven,’ ‘Paid.’ Do you understand this, dear children?”

“Yes, ma'am,” sounded all over the room, and here and there were faces where the tears were streaming down. One of these was Tommy's. He saw it all, and from that moment those words had a meaning they had never had before.

“What do you think of God, children?” asked the teacher.

"Good!" "Good!" "Good!" they all cried.
 "And how does Jesus seem to you?"
 "O, how kind He is!" exclaimed a little voice.
 "And what about the one who has his debts forgiven, children?"

"O, Miss Neal, I should think he'd feel so happy, and so easy in his mind, too," spoke Tommy, and a glad look lighted up his whole face; "I should think he'd never be tired of loving and thanking Jesus."

"I should think so too, Tommy," said the teacher, "and more, I don't believe he'd ever want to get in debt again; do you think he would? No, no; his love for Jesus would make him hate sin. He would try to please God; to obey Him; to do everything to show his gratitude."

It was in this way that Tommy's home trouble helped him understand God's great love. He never felt sorry for the loss of that morning's breakfast, for his mother's tears, and his own anxious thoughts about the grocer's bill, for these had led him to think, and helped him to see how God could forgive sin for Jesus' sake.

AUNT EMMA.

THE CHILD AT HOME.

BOSTON, APRIL, 1872.

National, Christian, Unsectarian.

GIVING AWAY.



ON the first page of this paper is a picture of an old man and a little girl. I do not know much about them, only this—I know that the man came to beg, and the little girl gave him something to eat.

The picture has set me a thinking. My little girls come to me on Sunday morning, and each of the three says, "Papa, there is

a 'collection' in Sunday-school, and we want a penny to give. Mr. Cooke says we ought to be 'benevolent.'" Then I give them a cent apiece, and they put them into the Sunday-school contribution-box.

Did you ever think, girls and boys, "who gives the money?" Do *you*? You put it into the box, I know. It was given to you for that. Could you honestly do anything else with it?

If you had earned it, you could have given it away, but you did not earn it. How about the little girl in the picture? She gave the old man something to eat—but was it hers to give away? If your mamma has been in the habit of giving you small sums of money, and you have saved them, and give them or a part of them away, then it is you who give. But you do not give when you carry a penny from mamma's pocket to the contribution-box. The money must be yours, to use as you please, before *you* can give it away. Then if you please to give it, and do give it, the gift is yours, not mamma's.

I receive money from churches and Sunday-schools to give papers and books to people who cannot buy them. Now don't you think I should deceive if I were to make believe that it is I who give the papers and books away? I think I should, and so I take pains to let it be known where the money comes from. God blesses givers. But I do not take the blessings to myself, I think they belong to those who send their money to me.

If we have no money, and papa will give us some to put in the box, that is better than not putting any in, but let us try to get some that is our own, and put some of that in.

I believe the little girl in the picture is giving away some of her mother's provisions, but she is too little to have any of her own to give. I have no doubt she would like to give something that was her own—"really and truly" her own, as she would say.

KINDNESS TO BIRDS.



UCH a pretty peasant-girl!" exclaimed Julia, as she looked at the girl in the picture before us. "What a graceful form! What beautiful hair, waving in the wind!" It was all true; the peasant-girl is charming in form and very graceful, but she has a charm that is more interesting than beauty of person.

Do you remember the story in the last paper about the Stork, and how kind the German people are to it? This girl is one who loves the birds. She is so kind to them that they come and fly about her, and sing their sweet songs to her. She has given them some grain to eat, and that brings them about her.

I read the other day of some rich men who built a high board fence about a lot near one of our largest cities. In the lot were seats, and everything to make the place comfortable and convenient. The men caught a great many pigeons, and put them in cages. Pigeons are very tame and gentle birds, you know.

When these harmless birds were in the cages, a great many persons were let into the inclosure, and at a certain time, the pigeons were driven out of the cages. They felt as if they were free again, but just as they were let out several men were ready with guns, and fired among them. Many were killed, some were painfully wounded, and few got away alive. The men called this "sport," and that was all the people came to see and to do.

These men were cruel, I think. If they had been hungry, and needed the pigeons for food, no one would have found fault with them. But to kill and maim the birds only to see who could kill the most is only cruel. Let us remember it.

ROSE'S NEW NURSE.

BY CHARLOTTE GREY.



ANNIE SEYMOUR walked home from school very slowly that pleasant April afternoon. Judging from her face, you would have called her a poor, tired little girl after her day's hard study; and yet she had strength enough left to swing briskly back and forth the satchel containing her books, and also to send rolling off, with sudden little jerks of her foot, the pebbles that lay in her way. Tired or not, she certainly had not the happy, contented spirit which such a day in the early spring ought to bring.

In the same listless manner she crossed the yard of her own home, and opened the door. There sat mamma with baby Rose, waiting to give the welcoming kiss. "The little darling!" cried Fannie, covering her with kisses, and at the same time unclasping the five stiff fingers, that held a whole handful of her curls tightly grasped. "How I do wish I could stay at home and take care of baby, instead of always going to school!"

Mrs. Seymour had for some time noticed the slight interest that her little girl felt in her school, and like a wise and prudent mother determined for once to let her wish be granted, hoping that time would show her mistakes. So she quietly replied, "Since nurse went away sick, I really need some help in the care of Rose, and if you were willing to give up your school, you might be of great assistance to me." Willing! Fannie thought she could make the sacrifice, and immediately offered her constant services. It was decided, however, that two hours both morning and afternoon would be quite enough for a beginner, and that by and by, if she still wished, the time should be lengthened.

O! what a relief it was, when next morning the bell rang out for all to make haste and come to school, and the little folks were seen hurrying along from every direction to obey the call,—what a relief it was to Fannie that she was no longer one of its subjects. Until ten o'clock she was her own mistress, and then mamma brought Miss Rose to be "taken care of." Fresh from her nap, and beaming with smiles, baby looked so charming, Fannie declared she "could eat her up." That morning everything moved smoothly; Rose liked to ride in her carriage; was much amused at watching a flock of chickens, that had strayed over from a neighbor's yard, and was scratching and picking about; then she rode to the brook, and crowed



KINDNESS TO BIRDS.

and clapped her hands in great glee to see the stones splash in the water. Fannie's first trial was a success, and as she carried baby back to mamma, she said she "wasn't a bit tired, but all ready for another play with her little sister."

In the afternoon out came the carriage again, and again was Rose nicely fixed for another ride; this time the chickens didn't appear, and as it made her arms ache to keep throwing stones in the water, Fannie proposed for a change to give her charge one nice, long ride up and down the street. Soon she began to meet her companions returning from school, and naturally wished to stop and chat awhile; but Rose didn't enjoy this kind of amusement, and soon began to squirm about and utter sounds very much like little grunts, which gradually became regular screams; so Fannie was compelled to bid her friends good-by, and go on and on, until she wasn't sorry at last to land the baby at home; and yet she told mamma that night, that she liked being nurse much better than be-

ing a scholar, although without knowing it she was both.

When Fannie woke next morning, it seemed as if dismal winter had taken the place of beautiful spring, for the sleet was beating against the window, the wind whistling around the corner, and everything as dreary as possible. Mrs. Seymour feared that the want of sunshine would be felt in the house quite as much as out-doors, and hinted to Fannie that more patience might be required that day in managing Rose, as the rain would deprive her of her daily airing. So Fannie went to work very earnestly, building block houses, which were quickly swept away before the roofs could be put on, shaking strings of spools, jingling some little tin-plates, and yet keeping so close a watch upon the clock, that before the first stroke of twelve sounded she already had baby in her arms and was half-way to mamma's room.

But in the afternoon the trial came; Mrs. Seymour must go and inquire for the sick nurse, and although Rose had not taken her usual nap, she must be left in the care of her older sister. No sooner had the door closed behind her mother than baby began to cry, and in her half sleepy state refused to be comforted. All the morning's playthings had lost their charm, and the more Fannie tried to amuse her, the louder she cried, while the little doubled-up fists kept rubbing the tired eyes; till at last, with baby in her arms, she began walking and dancing about the room. This had the desired effect; gradually the sobs ceased; but after half an hour's exercise, with aching back and weary limbs, she ventured to sit down for a moment, when again the dreaded wail was heard, and she started once more on her journey round the room. The little head sank lower on her shoulder, and Fannie, slyly peeping at the flushed face, at last saw the heavy eyelids closed, and Rose was fast asleep.

When Mrs. Seymour reported that nurse could resume her duties in a week, Fannie made no objections; she had decided to attend school cheerfully.

We read in an old fable that long ago every one was invited to come and deposit their burdens in one large heap, and then to choose from it such as they thought would be less wearisome to bear: but none could be suited, and each returned carrying the same burden they had brought.

So Fannie's cross was made for her, and she learned that none of her choosing could be lighter.

FREELY GIVE.



NOW, a word to my little friends as to giving. Mr. Wesley used to say to the members of his society, "Get all you can! save all you can!! give all you can!!!" and though most of them took good care to do the two first, a large number forgot the last; and yet, when the last is done from a right motive, it is a sure way to help the first; for "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." "He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord;" "I will repay," He has said.

I once knew a boy who, when visiting an old Christian while suffering and in distress, gave him all he had, — a single half-crown. Was he a loser? Certainly not. In a remarkable way he got another one, quite unexpectedly, and the same boy has gone on increasing his giving, and God's blessing seems to rest on all he puts his hand to. I once saw a motto, of which the gentleman whose it was might well be proud (as he was) when he impressed the seal upon the wax — "A hand to give, and a heart to forgive."

If it's only a little you can give, give it, for the littles put together make the large and mighty. You know "mony a little makes a muckle," and whilst you work and give, don't forget to pray, "Thy kingdom come."

"Have you ever brought a penny to the missionary box? A penny which you might have spent like other little folks; And when it falls among the rest, have you ever heard a ring, Like a pleasant song of welcome which the other pennies sing? This is missionary music, and it has a pleasant sound, For it tells us of good news that goeth all the world around; For pennies small, and dollars the Gospel news will send, Which shows the distant heathen that the Saviour is their friend."



THE CHICKADEES.

And O! what joyous music is the missionary song, When it seems to come from every heart, and sounds from every tongue;

When happy Christian little ones all sing with one accord, Of the times when realms of darkness shall be kingdoms of the Lord!

But sweeter, sweeter far than all, which Jesus loves to hear Are children's voices when they breathe a missionary prayer; When they bring the heart-petition to the great Redeemer's throne,

That He will choose the heathen out and take them for his own.

This is the music Jesus taught when He was here below; This is the music Jesus loves to hear in glory now; And many a one from distant lands will reach his heavenly home,

In answer to the children's prayer — "O Lord, Thy kingdom come."

Then, missionary children, let this music never cease, Work on, work on in earnest for the Lord, the Prince of Peace; There is praying work, and paying work for every heart and hand,

Till the missionary chorus shall go forth through all the land."

This is the glorious chorus you must help to swell.

THE CHICKADEES.



LAST year — I think it was in September — we had a picture of a dear little girl looking up into a tree on which hung a fine apple. We have had a good many pictures of trees in our paper besides that one, but I do not remember that any of them showed us a tree so close to us, as this picture does. Here we see a branch, with a nice nest on it, and two pretty chickadees standing over the nest. What do we see in the nest? Not eggs, but three little birds, each with his mouth wide open.

Look at the bird on the upper twig. He appears to see us. How sharp his eye is! He is a dear little creature. And the other one — how kindly she looks down at the little hungry ones! Do you suppose the chickadees can see the church steeple away off in the village? They don't know what a church is, do they? And yet, how gayly they seem to sing praises to the Maker of all the beauties about them! They seem almost to have reason.

God takes care of them. He will fill all those wide-open mouths. I am sure He will. Did not Jesus tell us He looks after the sparrows? He takes care of all his creatures. A "creature" is a thing that God has created.

Does God take care of *all* his creatures?

But I am sure I have seen some beings that never seem to sing his praises, as these little chickadees do. Have not you? Can such thankless creatures be *his*?

It seems as if a thankless boy or man or girl or woman ought to be ashamed to look at one of these sweet little thankful chickadees. They praise God, but he doesn't! And yet he has a soul, and a mind as well as body to be thankful for. The bird has only a little nest to live in, and the man has a fine, warm house. The bird only lives a few weeks or months. The man lives years here, and for Christ's dear sake may live — years? — no, forever, not in a beautiful earth, but in a golden heaven!

Think of it. Let us be as thankful as the chickadees, at least.

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"

A TRUE STORY ABOUT A RAISIN SEED.

BY CORNELIA H. LEE.



WHEN I was a very little child, perhaps five years old, I sat next another girl who brought a raisin seed to school. Now you say, Well, that is a pretty small thing to make a story about! but I am not *making* a story. I am telling you the truth. Lucy showed me the seed, and when she was called up to read she laid the seed on the bench between us. A raisin was a great prize in those days, and I thought the seed would taste good; so, thinking nobody would see me, I took it and put it in my mouth. I was disappointed to find it both hard and tasteless. When Lucy came back she missed the seed, and accused me of taking it,

KEEP ME, FATHER.

Duet. *Semichorus.*

Keep me, Fa-ther, safe-ly keep me, Nev-er let my foot-steps stray:

Duet or Trio. *Semichorus.*

Lead me to the fount e-ter-nal, There my doubts and fears al-lay.

Alto or Bass Solo. *Duet.*

Keep me, Fa-ther, safe-ly keep me From all dan-gers on the way,

Semichorus. *Duet.*

From all dan-gers on the way, While I tread the path-way rugged,

ad lib. *Full chorus, a tempo.*

Climb the hills to last-ing day, While I tread the path-way rug-ged,

Ritard.

Climb the hills to last-ing day, Climb the hills to last-ing day.

Keep me, Father, safely keep me,
Till in heaven I wake above!
Make me pure, and good, and holy,
Spotless make me, like the dove.

Keep me, Father, safely keep me,
Till the toil of life is o'er,
Till the angels home shall bear me
Safely up on Jordan's shore.

and I denied the charge. The seed was of no value, but see how many of God's express commands it led me to break. First, Thou shalt not covet. Second, Thou shalt not steal. Third, Thou shalt not lie, or bear false witness. Nothing is small which can induce us to commit such sins as these. More than half a century has passed since this happened, and if I live to be a hundred years old, I am afraid I shall not forget it. I think God has forgiven me, but how am I to forget or forgive myself? I wounded my conscience, and the scar often aches. If I had only remembered "Thou God seest me," I should have been saved both sin and shame. I shall not tell you my name, for some of you may know me, and I could never hold up my head if I should hear you say, That is the old woman who stole a raisin seed and told a lie, when she was a little girl!

Who is the first shepherd mentioned in the Bible? Name some eminent men who, during a portion of their lives, were shepherds?

Where is the exaltation of David from the office of a shepherd to that of king referred to in the book of Psalms?

CHILD'S PRAYER.

BY RUTH ARGYLE.

LOVING Jesus, wilt Thou listen
To an infant's feeble prayer?
I would praise Thee for thy goodness—
For thy constant tender care;

For the blessings Thou hast given,
As each hour has passed away;
Thou hast never me forgotten—
But dost keep me day by day.

I would thank Thee for each mercy,
That thy loving hand doth give;
For my friends, my food and clothing,
And the home in which I live.

Guard me ever, blessed Jesus,
'Till the angel voices sweet
Call me to my home in heaven,
Joyful my dear Lord to meet.

SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS.

WHAT nation held the office of shepherd in abomination?

Which of our Lord's parables refers to the wandering propensities of the sheep, and to the good shepherd's care in seeking them?

Mention some passages in the Old Testament which have the same reference.

Give an illustration of the dangers to which sheep are exposed in Eastern countries, and of the good shepherd's watchful care over them.

What saying of our Lord's does this illustrate?

What words in the same discourse indicate how far the love and power of Jesus exceed that of an earthly shepherd?

Where is the Lord Jesus Christ spoken of in the Old Testament under this figure?

Give other examples from the New Testament of the same title being given to Jesus.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN THE MARCH NUMBER.

1. 1 Sam. xvii. 17; xxv. 18; 2 Sam. xvii. 27, 28.
2. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6; Is. ix. 3.
3. Matt. ix. 37, 38.
4. Matt. xiii. 39; Rev. xiv. 14-16.
5. Ex. xxx. 23-25.
6. Ex. xxx. 26-31.
7. *Priest:* Lev. viii. 12, 30; x. 7. *King:* 1 Sam. x. 1; xvi. 13; 1 Kings i. 39; xix. 15, 16; 2 Kings ix. 1-3. *Prophet:* 1 Kings xix. 16.
8. Ps. ii. 2; xiv. 7; Is. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18, 21; Acts iv. 26, 27; x. 38; Heb. i. 8, 9.
9. *Prophet:* Deut. xviii. 15-19; John iv. 19; vi. 14; vii. 40; Luke xxiv. 19; Acts iii. 22. *Priest:* Heb. iii. 1; iv. 14. *King:* John xviii. 36, 37; 1 Cor. xv. 25; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rev. xvii. 14.

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Mrs. Chaplin will contribute for 1872 a story entitled "Good-for-Nothing, and What he was Good for," which will be very interesting and instructive.

Henry Ward Beecher's "Lecture-Room Talks" will be reported during 1872, as heretofore.

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